



10 DOWNING STREET  
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28 October 2019

THE PRIME MINISTER

*Dear Donald,*

I refer to the draft European Council Decision EUCO XT 20024/1/19 REV 1, which extends to 31 January 2020 the period under Article 50(3) TEU. As you are well aware, I have no discretion under the UK's European Union (Withdrawal) (No.2) Act 2019, which was imposed on this Government against its will, to do anything other than confirm the UK's formal agreement to this extension, as per the attached draft Decision.

I must make clear my view that this unwanted prolongation of the UK's membership of the EU is damaging to our democracy and to the relationship between us and our European friends. While we will of course not seek to deliberately disrupt the EU's business, I must underline that I continue to have a responsibility as Prime Minister to protect the UK's national interests during this period, including in EU decision-making.

I would have much preferred it if the UK Parliament could have proceeded rapidly to ratify the deal we reached between us. Unfortunately I very much fear that this Parliament will never do so as long as it has the option of further delay. That is why I am seeking a General Election in December to ensure the election of a fresh Parliament which is capable of resolving the issue in accordance with our constitutional norms.

But, in case Parliament resists this too, I would also urge EU Member States to make clear that a further extension after 31 January is not possible. This is plenty of time to ratify our deal. It will avoid this Parliament simply extending our membership again and again, distracting from the good conduct of the business of the European Union, and corroding public trust in politics in the UK.

I very much hope that we can soon put this difficult period behind us, and move forward rapidly to ending our EU membership and beginning the negotiations on the future Free Trade Agreement and the future partnership of friends which will come with it.

I am copying this letter to members of the European Council, the President of the Commission, and the President of the European Parliament.

Yours sincerely



His Excellency Mr Donald Tusk